

PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND CRIME

SOME PARAGRAPHS ABOUT THE POSITION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS MONTHLY.

Prof. E. C. Brannon gives a Thoughtful and Instructive Paper upon the Relation of the Public Schools to Crime.

(Special Cor. of STATE CHRONICLE.)

ATLANTA, GA., April 23rd, 1890.—The Popular Science Monthly is what its title indicates it to be—a scientific journal. It assumes the position of Herbert Spencer upon State interference in education, to be true. Herbert Spencer believes that education is a family matter and not a State matter, and that the State has no right to be concerned about education at all.

But, then, upon the same scientific postulates, the State has no right to interfere in the interests of the halt and the maimed and the blind. The strong and healthy have the right of the fittest to survive. The only right a poor diseased wretch has is to hunt out his little corner and to die out of the way of the progress of the race.

Oh, yes, all this is science, but it is not humanity. It is scientific truth but it is not right, for all that—or so according to good old-fashioned notions of morality.

But assume that a State does not have the right to interfere in the education of its people; suppose that the position is scientifically true; what then? This—States care little for abstract right. It is wise expediency and hard necessity that move them oftener than otherwise, when it comes to policies of State. How would it do for Georgia or North Carolina to let public education alone, leave it to the family entirely, to leave the rich to live in a state of culture, and the poor to die in ignorance?

We might think it would do, if we were not continually falling upon some such startling and significant facts as the following, which indicate that we are already suffering in the South because education is not common enough among us.

"In 1890, one man in every 873 of population in Massachusetts was an inventor; in Georgia, only one man in every 10,281 of population; in North Carolina, one man in every 19,714." Why so? Well, it appears to be mainly a question of the commonness of education, of the general intelligence of the public mind. For the first century and a quarter of the life of the Massachusetts colony, more than half of the public money was spent to educate the people. There are more than two million volumes in her free public libraries to-day. And the poor people of Massachusetts have more than enough in the Savings banks to buy the whole State of Georgia—about 380 millions in these banks last year. Think of it!

Still the question turns, not upon education as contributing to the material prosperity of a community, but upon its effect upon morality. If it contributed nothing to public morality, then it is the duty of every good citizen to ask why not, and to do so thoughtfully and earnestly.

It is true that the American public school is open to attack, and not less from its friends than from its enemies. Matthew Arnold, an English inspector of public schools, and a warm advocate of culture for the masses, visited America and looked into American schools recently. Now, we are accustomed to regard Matthew Arnold as very unorthodox indeed about religious matters, but this is what he said of American schools—"The cardinal fault of the American public schools is the neglect of the Bible. It is time that we were discussing these matters freely."

I frequently meet with the man that does not believe in popular education on general principles. He affects to be a scientific man—a disciple of the Popular Science Monthly doctrines. He is an enemy of public education every time, however. Will you let me have a word with him on some other of the general propositions I frequently fall upon in my rounds? This, for a start: Education increases crime. If the allegation be true, the converse is true—illiteracy decreases crime. Content for the first proposition, and you are obliged to contend for the last. But who believes in the heart of him that ignorance is virtue, and that it is folly to be wise? Who believes that it is the part of wisdom for a father to keep his children away from books and out of schools? Who believes that it is wise for the State to ignore the education of its citizenry? What father pursues this plan? What State or country deliberately adopts this policy?

Then exactly what relation has education to crime? Perhaps it may be argued that the relation is one of quality rather than quantity. The arguments of Allison and Buckle are to the effect that education does not effect the sum of crime, but has to do only with the items of crime; that educated communities are not less criminal, nor more criminal, than primitive and rude communities, but that the crimes of the one differ in kind from the crimes of the other. This contention would regard education as making men not less criminal, but as making them criminals of a more refined sort.

The man that yields himself to this argument, must educate his boy with the one motive of making, not a gross and vulgar criminal, but an elegant and engaging scoundrel, if it should so chance from other causes that he is to be a criminal at all. In short, he will resort to education as a safe-guard against wrong doing, but with the hope that in any event the boy may escape being a dirty dog of a fellow, but such a specimen, say, of polite lechery as the London Truth occasionally falls upon in West End.

Now in point of truth, no man among us, not even the sophist, looks upon education in this way, as he educates his own son. In the hearts of us we believe every time that if the qualities and tendencies of the education of our boys have been intrinsically good, then the chances for evil in them are lessened. In other words every man and every community believes in education as a matter of self defense, argue about it as you may, and that education as a defense has distinct value as a defense. This is the silent and universally forceful motive in every educational move forward since the beginning.

gining. And no argument, make it what you please, counts for anything against the weight of men moving forward with this belief in their hearts. As little could you have halted Napoleon's Old Guard with sky rocketing.

But this drives us to the conclusion that the safety of our children lies largely on the kind of education they have. But we are not at all bothered about it sometimes. For instance, I occasionally meet a father that does not know the name of teacher of his boy. But he does know who has charge of his horse. I sometimes meet a man that will not pay for a piece of ditching he has had done, until he goes out and see how it has been done. But he cannot be caught going to see how his boy is being taught. A gentleman is interested in horses and I find Mayhew in his library. The gentleman also has boys, but I have never seen a book on Modern Pedagogy on his table.

The father and mother, the preachers and the Sunday school workers, and all the thoughtful men and women of the community—do they go enough into the schools at home to see what is being done there; to see whether or not there be anything in their harmful to their children. Why not, pray?

Churches and preachers, Sunday Schools, and Sunday School teachers, church and private schools, theological seminaries and the like all have increased in members in America, since 1850.

And says the Popular Science Monthly, "criminals in 1850 were one in 3,442, in 1860 one in 1,647, in 1870 one in 1,021, in 1880 one in 837." Have the churches and the preachers caused this increase in crime? Or has it been despite the efforts of all these agencies for good. And but for all these agencies for good, would not the increase of crime been even greater? These same questions in this connection are pertinent of public schools. Of course neither churches nor public schools nor any other agency "subdues the tendency to crime." But will you say that any one of these agencies increase this tendency? Do you not believe that all of these help to retard the rate of increase? Admit that there is an increase of crime in America, and it means that all of these institutions for good need bettering, and more of right and more of heart put into them.

The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius and the Manual of Epictetus would not be deemed unfit reading for young people. It is a part of common information and culture and no unfit thing, I take it, to know of the History of the Israelites, and the Life and Teachings of the Christ. A good reason for banishing Moses or the Christ from our schools and school libraries would be a sufficient reason likewise for banishing Socrates and Seneca. Aside from the rabid pronouncements of the secretary, and the weak concessions of the politician among us, upon what broad and sensible ground can any book of morals be excluded from our public schools? The argument that shuts the Bible out, and leaves Epictetus in, is an argument that needs careful analysis. The best thing is to know all that there is to know about them all, I should say.

But more, I know no bar in the organic law of this country or of this State, in state or local enactment, forbidding us to teach, by precept and example in our public schools, The Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the Fifteenth, the Twenty-third, the Twenty-fourth, and the one hundred and twenty-first Psalms, and that wonderful chapter of Paul's on Charity. And we teach them everywhere in the schools as best we may. The only fault there is in it lies in our efforts—not in our purposes.

When I am denied the right to do all this in my system of schools under my charge, then I yield the charge. If I did not believe that our public schools could be and were as distinctly religious as any other schools, I should turn my back on them to-day.

The severance of church and State in America has been well. The divorce of religion and government would be a mixed evil. The two are not the same. It could easily be shown that the Fathers of our Constitution meant the first; it would be hard to show that they intended the last.

Perhaps no man in America has had more varied experiences than Joe Jefferson, or knows more of the varieties of American life than he. Read this from his Autobiography in the Century: "Look at the decorum observed by the vast assemblages that go to witness our national games. Disturbances are very rare. It would have been indecorous, if not dangerous, when I was a boy, for ladies and gentlemen to visit any public grounds containing such large masses of people, whereas now they can do so with perfect safety. What lies at the foundation of this improvement? People went to church in those days as readily as they do now, and the laws were administered quite as rigidly. There is only one solution to this problem—the free school has done this work."

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Richmond & Danville R. R. Co.
CONDENSED SCHEDULE.
In Effect Feb. 16th, 1890.

SOUTHBOUND.		
	No. 50.	No. 52.
Lv. Richmond.....	3:00 p.m.	2:30 a.m.
" Burkeville.....	5:00 p.m.	4:30 a.m.
" Keysville.....	5:41 p.m.	5:08 a.m.
" Danville.....	8:40 p.m.	8:05 a.m.
Ar. Greensboro.....	10:27 p.m.	9:42 a.m.
Lv. Goldsboro.....	2:20 p.m.	4:50 p.m.
Ar. Raleigh.....	4:40 p.m.	9:00 p.m.
Lv. Raleigh.....	4:45 p.m.	1:00 a.m.
Durham.....	5:48 p.m.	2:55 a.m.
Ar. Greensboro.....	8:20 p.m.	7:30 a.m.
Lv. Winston Salem.....	4:50 p.m.	6:15 a.m.
" Greensboro.....	10:37 p.m.	9:50 a.m.
Ar. Salisbury.....	12:35 a.m.	11:15 a.m.
" Statesville.....	1:49 a.m.	12:00 p.m.
" Asheville.....	7:22 a.m.	4:27 p.m.
" Hot Springs.....	9:33 a.m.	6:15 p.m.
Lv. Salisbury.....	12:32 a.m.	11:23 a.m.
Ar. Charlotte.....	2:05 a.m.	12:40 p.m.
" Spartanburg.....	4:51 a.m.	3:38 p.m.
" Greenville.....	5:55 a.m.	4:46 p.m.
" Atlanta.....	11:00 a.m.	9:40 p.m.
Lv. Charlotte.....	2:20 a.m.	1:00 p.m.
Ar. Columbia.....	6:30 a.m.	5:10 p.m.
" Augusta.....	10:30 a.m.	9:00 p.m.

NORTHBOUND.		
	No. 51.	No. 53.
Lv. Augusta.....	6:10 p.m.	8:50 a.m.
" Columbia.....	10:35 p.m.	12:50 p.m.
Ar. Charlotte.....	3:13 a.m.	5:15 p.m.
Lv. Atlanta.....	6:00 p.m.	7:10 a.m.
Ar. Greenville.....	12:35 a.m.	1:48 p.m.
" Spartanburg.....	1:39 a.m.	2:52 p.m.
" Charlotte.....	4:25 a.m.	5:30 p.m.
" Salisbury.....	6:02 a.m.	7:05 p.m.
Lv. Hot Springs.....	11:10 p.m.	12:25 p.m.
Ar. Asheville.....	10:35 p.m.	2:07 p.m.
" Statesville.....	5:02 a.m.	6:06 p.m.
Ar. Salisbury.....	5:53 a.m.	6:50 p.m.
Lv. Salisbury.....	6:07 a.m.	7:12 p.m.
Ar. Greensboro.....	7:45 a.m.	8:40 p.m.
Ar. Winston-Salem.....	11:40 a.m.	12:30 a.m.
Lv. Greensboro.....	9:45 a.m.	11:00 p.m.
Ar. Durham.....	12:01 p.m.	5:00 a.m.
" Raleigh.....	1:05 p.m.	7:45 a.m.
Lv. Raleigh.....	1:05 p.m.	9:00 a.m.
Ar. Goldsboro.....	3:00 p.m.	12:50 p.m.
Lv. Greensboro.....	7:50 a.m.	8:50 p.m.
Ar. Danville.....	9:32 a.m.	10:20 p.m.
" Keysville.....	12:45 p.m.	1:50 a.m.
" Burkeville.....	1:23 p.m.	2:45 p.m.
" Richmond.....	3:45 p.m.	5:15 a.m.

BETWEEN
West Point, Richmond and Raleigh.
Via Keysville, Oxford and Durham.

54 & 102	STATIONS.	55 & 103
7:00 a.m.	Lv. West Point.....	6:10 p.m.
9:40 a.m.	Ar. Richmond.....	7:45 p.m.
11:00 a.m.	Lv. Richmond.....	4:40 p.m.
1:00 p.m.	" Burkeville.....	2:45 p.m.
2:05 p.m.	" Keysville.....	2:00 p.m.
2:25 p.m.	" Fort Mitchell.....	12:38 p.m.
2:52 p.m.	" Finney Wood.....	12:47 p.m.
2:45 p.m.	" Chasewood.....	12:30 p.m.
3:06 p.m.	" Five Forks.....	12:10 p.m.
3:10 p.m.	" Clarksville.....	11:55 a.m.
3:35 p.m.	" Scurry.....	11:40 a.m.
3:50 p.m.	" Bullock's.....	11:24 a.m.
3:58 p.m.	" Stovall's.....	11:15 a.m.
4:22 p.m.	Ar. Oxford.....	10:46 a.m.
4:00 p.m.	Lv. Oxford.....	10:00 a.m.
5:15 p.m.	Ar. Dabney.....	9:25 a.m.
5:45 p.m.	" Henderson.....	8:55 a.m.
4:22 p.m.	Lv. Oxford.....	10:40 a.m.
4:45 p.m.	" Stem's.....	10:16 a.m.
4:55 p.m.	" Lyon's.....	10:09 a.m.
5:17 p.m.	" Holloway.....	9:43 a.m.
5:39 p.m.	" Durham.....	9:25 a.m.
5:59 p.m.	" Carey.....	8:33 a.m.
7:00 p.m.	Ar. Raleigh.....	8:15 a.m.

†Daily except Sunday. *Daily. ‡Daily except Monday.

Additional train leaves Oxford daily except Sunday 11:00 a. m., arrive Henderson 12:05 p. m., returning leave Henderson 3:10 p. m. daily except Sunday, arrive Oxford 3:15 p. m.

No. 50 leaving Goldsboro 2:30 p. m. and Raleigh 4:45 p. m. daily makes connection at Durham with No. 19, leaving at 6:00 p. m. daily, except Sunday for Oxford, Henderson, and all points on O. & H. O. & C., and R. & M. Roads.

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Nos. 51 and 53 connect at Richmond from and to West Point and Baltimore daily except Sunday.

Nos. 50 and 51 connect at Goldsboro with trains to and from Morehead City and Wilmington, and at Selma to and from Fayetteville.

No. 52 connects at Greensboro for Fayetteville.

No. 53 connects at Selma for Wilson, N. C.

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